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Dr. Shipp Gains Fame As Physician, Teacher, Poet, Housewife

CRICKETS were chirping along the banks of the silently-flowing Jordan River as the black silhouette of a horse-drawn buggy jogged leisurely along in the moonlight. The reins hung slack from the whipstock. The faithful old horse followed the rutted road unerringly.

The lone occupant of the creaking vehicle was a woman, middle aged, her graying hair pulled straight back and tied in a bun under a broad-brimmed hat. Beside her on the seat was a black valise, a familiar token of the medical profession. On her lap was a notebook in which she was writing.

Occasionally, she stopped to gaze at the tranquil scenery, then crossed out a line and wrote another.

She was Dr. Ellis Reynolds Shipp, pioneer woman physician in Salt Lake City, returning from a midnight call to a home out in the country. She was pensive as she drove. She had just lost a race with death. A little girl had died before the good doctor arrived.

At such a time, her thoughts turned to the only source of comfort available. She was writing a poem, expressing her faith in God.

This remarkable physician, poet, scholar, editor, teacher, housewife and women's leader herself had known the mingled pain and joy of bearing children. She had borne 10. She also had known a mother's heartache at seeing her baby's life ebb away. Five of her own had died in infancy.

Perhaps the recollection of that sorrow and a determination to try to overcome its cause was the motivation in her seeking a medical career when she was nearly 29. It took a great deal of grit and determination for her to leave her beloved husband and children for two-and-a-half years of intensive study. She battled homesickness, ill health and poverty during the entire time. Only a deep-rooted faith sustained her.

That faith had become ingrained through years of training in a Latter-day Saint home. She was born in Davis County, Iowa, in 1847. Five years later, her parents migrated to Utah, settling in Pleasant Grove, several miles south of Salt Lake City.

When Ellis was 14, her mother died. The responsibility of keeping house and caring for the younger children rested for a time upon this shy, studious girl. Later, she was invited by Brigham Young to join his family in the Beehive House and attend school with his children. She did so for some months

prior to her marriage to Milford Shipp in 1866.

For the next 10 years, she settled down to being a housewife and mother until the call came for her to go to the Women's Medical College in Philadelphia.

The rest of her life was devoted to serving her people. She trained nurses and midwives from Mexico to Canada, helped edit a medical journal, served as a member of the Relief Society General Board, and watched over her family.

Dr. Shipp died in Salt Lake City in 1939 at the age of 92.





French East Mission Leaders Attend Special Conference

New goals were set by supervising elders and zone counselors of French East Mission at conference held recently at mission home, Geneva, Switzerland under direction of Pres. Henry D. Moyle Jr.